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Memorandum for:

This memorandum was prepared for Mr. Tom Troy of the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs at the Department of State by the Office of European Analysis. It will be used for background information for his briefing of Rozanne L. Ridgway, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs.

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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE
13 May 1986

Socialist International: Prospects for June Congress

Summary

The Socialist International's (SI) congress on 21-23 June in Lima, Peru--its first since 1983--will have peace and the world economy as its theme.* The tentative agenda includes arms control, Third World economic problems--especially Latin American debt--and reports from regional committees on the situation in Central America, southern Africa and the Middle East. SI positions on arms control and Central America have become less one-sided in the past year or two, but resolutions on these and other issues still are likely to have an anti-US tone.

* The present-day Socialist International dates from a congress held in Frankfurt in 1951. Originally consisting mainly of European parties, the SI has expanded its membership in the Third World, notably since Willy Brandt became president in 1976. The main policymaking body of the SI is its congress, which meets every three years and is composed of six representatives from each affiliated party: in the period between congresses policy is determined by a bureau that meets twice a year. See Annex for a list of members.

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This memorandum was prepared by [redacted]
[redacted] the Office of European Analysis for Thomas Troy of the Bureau of European and Canadian Affairs at the Department of State. Questions and comments may be directed to [redacted] Chief, European Issues Division [redacted]

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Introduction

SI congresses are primarily public relations operations in the course of which non-binding resolutions are ratified and officers elected. The meetings are generally confused and poorly organized, but they do provide an occasion for members to make contacts, exchange views, and promote special interests. Congress resolutions are usually less radical than those proposed at preparatory committee meetings, in large part because when controversial questions are at issue, unanimity is found through generalities. [REDACTED]

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SI members believe they can play a useful role in promoting peace and stability, but the organization has been ineffectual in helping to resolve specific international problems. It tends to seize upon issues, only to move on to something else if they prove very difficult to resolve. Given the widely divergent interests of its members, internal conflicts are rife over such matters as French nuclear testing in the Pacific, INF deployment, and the Strategic Defense Initiative. Even though it is avowedly anti-Communist, the SI almost never criticizes Communist governments--quite possibly because it does not believe it can influence these regimes. In contrast, SI leaders are often quick to blame the US for world tensions. After the recent US attack on Libya, for example, the SI condemned the action as contrary to international law. [REDACTED]

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Arms Control

The SI's Advisory Council of Disarmament and Arms Control (SIDAC)--an outgrowth of a study group established in 1978 at the SI's Helsinki conference--reflects members' concern about the arms race. SIDAC's positions are shaped heavily by representatives from Austria, Japan, and the Scandinavian countries, which have an especially keen interest in arms control issues. Two key players are Finnish Prime Minister Sorsa and SI General Secretary Vananen, also a Finn. The other permanent member has been Walter Hacker of the Austrian Socialist Party, who is almost reflexively anti-American. [REDACTED]

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Over the years SIDAC has produced several drafts of its disarmament report, and delegations have traveled back and forth between Washington and Moscow--most recently in March 1985--to discuss security issues and arms control. At that time the draft generally favored Soviet positions, but, after the talks in Washington, it was modified to become more neutral in tone. The latest draft continues to criticize the Strategic Defense Initiative, but calls for on-the-spot verification of disarmament agreements and largely endorses US positions in INF negotiations. It also gives more emphasis than before to the elimination of chemical weapons and the need to preserve the ABM treaty, but it has dropped an earlier proposal for a nuclear-weapons-free zone in central Europe. [REDACTED]

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The SI's arms control conference in Vienna last October issued an appeal to the US and USSR calling for prevention of militarization of outer space, amending the test ban treaty to abolish nuclear weapons tests, eventual elimination of intermediate-range missiles in both East and West, and extension of SALT negotiations. According to diplomatic reporting, most delegates thought the superpowers' representatives had not engaged in any useful give-and-take and--in contrast to a large and active Soviet representation--the late arrival and early departure of the US delegation was widely noted. The most recent meeting of SIDAC in Oslo this March echoed many of these themes and stressed its intention to continue to exert pressure on the superpowers to negotiate binding agreements at the Geneva talks. SIDAC will be meeting once more before the June congress, and we expect the Soviet nuclear reactor disaster will be added to its agenda.

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Foreign Debt

The SI draft proposal on the less developed countries' debt problems focuses on the need to lengthen the term of loans while simultaneously decreasing interest rates. The working group that developed the draft proposes that a new international organization purchase existing LDC debt from creditor banks and governments at a discount rate in exchange for long-term bonds secured by the member governments. Interest on the bonds would be lower than the existing market rate with the difference shared by the governments and banks of the industrialized countries. The working group thought this plan would help increase production in LDCs by increasing investment capital and was therefore better than the Baker plan, which it commended as a serious effort but "too monetarist."

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Unless some of these practical matters are worked out in advance, however, it seems unlikely that the SI forum will be able to do anything more than endorse the idea in principle.

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Regional Issues

Central America. Since at least mid-1984 the Socialist International has been shifting its stance toward the problems of Central America, but SI officials have tended to voice these changes privately. The SI has come to view the election of Jose Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador as part of a genuine democratic process there, and criticism of the US role has decreased markedly. The SI has continued to make statements criticizing the Salvadoran government, usually on human rights, but the final declaration of the SI Committee on Latin America and the Caribbean

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[redacted]

(SICLAC)--which met in April to prepare for the SI congress--included only one sentence on El Salvador. [redacted]

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A more critical attitude toward Nicaragua has emerged since an SI fact-finding trip in February. The mission returned highly disturbed about Sandinista internal policies, especially on human rights, and made its dissatisfaction with the situation public. Nevertheless, the SI continues to criticize US policies toward Nicaragua, which it describes as "hindering progress" toward an overall settlement of the region's problems. The SICLAC statement in April predictably added to this criticism, but criticized Nicaragua in the same paragraph--a departure from usual practice. [redacted]

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Southern Africa. The most recent SI foray into southern Africa was an executive committee meeting with leaders of the Frontline States in Gaborone, Botswana in mid-April. SI President Willy Brandt ended the session with a statement reflecting many of the positions of the Frontline States and explicitly criticising US policy toward the region. He called on the US to halt aid to UNITA and said that linkage between Cuban troop withdrawal in Angola and Namibian independence was "unjustified." Any SI statement at the congress in Lima is likely to continue this stance and to reiterate Brandt's calls for an end to apartheid; the freeing of Nelson Mandela; and support for the African National Congress, the Southwest Africa Peoples Organization, and the United Democratic Front. It is also likely to call for the imposition of tougher sanctions against South Africa. [redacted]

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Middle East. While the search for a Middle East peace fits in well with the desire of SI leaders to deal with important problems outside Western Europe, the SI's Middle East committee has had few serious contacts recently with governments in the region and none with the PLO for more than a year. In the past, SI member Israel has been able to block passage of any resolution explicitly recognizing a role for the PLO in the peace process. At the SI's arms control conference in Vienna last fall, Israel's raid on the PLO's Tunis headquarters generated intense discussions but no resolution. Portugal's president, Mario Soares, has replaced Bruno Kreisky, a leading advocate of Palestinian rights, as the SI's point man on the Middle East, a factor that should further moderate the findings of this committee. [redacted]

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Outlook

SI leaders, like policies, tend to stay in place. We expect Willy Brandt and Pentti Vananen to retain their positions as president and general secretary of the SI, respectively. [redacted]

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[REDACTED]

The congress is likely to continue to recommend dialogue between the superpowers as one of the paths to peace and may back the recent Gorbachev proposals as a reasonable starting point toward reaching arms control agreements. At the same time, members may express alarm over the Soviet handling of the Chernobyl' disaster. The congress is less likely to lay out specific nostrums for the problems of Third World debtor countries, but will call on the industrial world to work with the SI to find a solution.

On regional issues, conference statements will tend to be critical of the US. Even statements on Nicaragua--which are likely for the first time to cast a more critical eye on the Sandinistas--will take the US to task for supporting the Contras and other "destabilizing" actions. In the discussion of southern Africa, the participants are likely to criticize Washington for its support of UNITA, its linkage of Cuban troop withdrawal to a settlement in Namibia, and its resistance to sanctions against South Africa. On the Middle East, the congress will probably fault the US for its approach to terrorism, citing the need to eliminate its causes rather than its perpetrators. [REDACTED]

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MEMBER PARTIES OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

Full Members:

Europe

Austria	Socialist Party
Belgium	Socialist Party (PS)
	Socialist Party (SP)
Denmark	Social Democratic Party
Finland	Social Democratic Party
France	Socialist Party
FRG	Social Democratic Party
Iceland	Social Democratic Party
Ireland	Labor Party
Italy	Social Democratic Party
	Socialist Party
Luxembourg	Socialist Workers' Party
Malta	Malta Labor Party
Netherlands	Labor Party
Norway	Labor Party
Portugal	Socialist Party
San Marino	Socialist Unity Party
Spain	Spanish Socialist
	Workers' Party
Sweden	Social Democratic Labor
	Party
Switzerland	Social Democratic Party
Turkey	Republican People's Party
United Kingdom	Labor Party
	Northern Ireland Labor Party
	Social Democratic and Labor
	Party

Americas

Barbados	Barbados Labor Party
Canada	New Democratic Party
Chile	Radical Party
Costa Rica	National Liberation Party
Dominican	
Republic	Dominican Revolutionary Party
Ecuador	Democratic Left Party
El Salvador	Democratic Left Party
Guatemala	Democratic Socialist Party
Jamaica	People's National Party
Paraguay	Febrerista Revolutionary
	Party
Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico Independence
	Party
Santa Lucia	Progressive Labor Party
United States	Democratic Socialists of
	America
Venezuela	Social Democrats USA
	Democratic Action

Africa

Burkina Faso	Progressive Front
Mauritius	Mauritius Labor Party
Senegal	Socialist Party

Asia

Israel	Israel Labor Party
	United Workers' Party
Japan	Democratic Socialist
	Party
Lebanon	Progressive Socialist
	Party
Malaysia	Democratic Action
	Party

Australia

Australia	Australian Labor Party
New Zealand	New Zealand Labor
	Party

Consultative Parties

Cyprus	EDEK Socialist Party
Guyana	Working People's
	Alliance
Netherlands	People's Electoral
Antilles	Movement
	New Antilles Movement
Peru	American Revolutionary
	Popular Alliance
Puerto Rico	Independence Party
St. Lucia	Progressive Labor
	Party
Venezuela	People's Electoral
	Movement

Consultative parties in exile include parties from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia.